This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NBI
Hill -

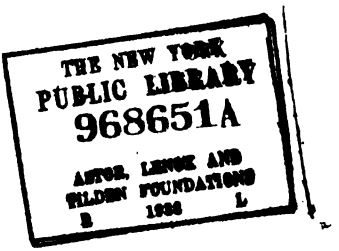
WESTERN WATERS

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

ELIZABETH SEWELL HILL

THE ROADSIDE PRESS
CHICAGO
1917



COPYRIGHT 1917

BY THE ROADSIDE PRESS

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

TO

MR. WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE

FRIEND OF POETS

BIEB 19

I
WESTERN WATERS

II
PEACE AND WAR

III
MEMORIES

IV
GOD'S WEATHER

WESTERN WATERS

COMING HOME
GOOD-BYE
LIFE ON THE LAKES
CONVOY
INTO THE FOG
DARIEN

COMING HOME

They have hauled in the gang-plank. The breast-line crawls back.
It is "Port, and hard over!" and out through the black
Of the storm and the night, and across to the mouth
Of the harbor, where stretching far out to the south,
Run the lights of the town.

Swinging slowly we turn,
Pointing out for mid-lake, past the long pier where burn
The red harbor-lights, where the great billows churn
Blow on blow on the spiles, spilling down the white foam—
But I've written the home-folks that I'm coming home.

And I'm coming; huddled close by the slow-falling rail,
Blinking red through the mist and the spray, while the hail
Rattles down the wet decks lifting high, with the wail
Up the wind of the fog-horn and behind on our trail,
And we nose straight out in the teeth of the gale,
I know by the throb that the engines prevail,
And—steady, my courage—unless the stars fail,
We'll make it.

But tell me, O gray eyes and blue,
Did you know in your watching, O dim eyes and true,
In that black night's wild fury while the storm-signals flew,
While the storm beat us back and the hoarse whistles blew—
Did you know, O my dear ones, I was coming to you?

The silence of midnight; the hiss of the swell;
The creaking of timbers; the close cabin smell;
The slow-swaying shadows; the jar of the screw;
The wind at the shutter; the feet of the crew;
The cry of a child—is he coming home too?

There's a rent in the night and a star glimmers through.
The skies clear above us; the west banks up brown;

The wind dies across us; the sea's running down;
And across the dim water, still breaking in foam,
Stretches out the far shore-line—and I'm coming home.

The hills smile a welcome; the long night is past;
And the ship's turning into the harbor at last.
The engines slow down; we steal through the slip,
Past the low burning lamp and with quivering lip
Call down to the life-savers cheering us on.

The weary throb sends us straight into the dawn,
Fair and white up the bay, half asleep, all adream,
In its translucent purple and pearl. Just a gleam
Out there of the earliest sail; here the curl
Of the first lazy smoke from a cabin—a girl
Loops up the long vines at the doorway. A swirl
Of white water behind us; then a stir at the dock.
Steam slowly! The head-line—the stern-line—the shock
As we swing alongside, and across the plank flock
Wan faces, with breath still a-quiver, the roar
Of the night still above and about them, the floor
Still uncertain; but over the grateful brown loam
We crowd to the shore-boat—and I'm coming home.

And away to the north over depths of cool green
From the bluffs overhead, where the deep-set ravine
Digs down to the heart of the wood, while a stream
Trickles out over sands drifting white, and the pier
Reaches out through the water to meet us. We're here!

From the pier to the boat-house and away down the shore
Flutters back to the group at the old farm-house door
The word that I'm coming. And from wrinkled old hands,
As the dear old feet toil through the weary white sands,
Bringing welcome and welcome, from boat-house and strand,

The hurrying, white-winged signals all come—
God pity the mortal who has never come home!

And I? I'm not worth it. But gray eyes and blue,
While the storms beat about me, O dear hearts and true,
Or the fogs flinging far, blot the stars from the blue,
If the pole star leads on or the rudder swings true,
It's not Heaven I'm after, I am coming to you.

But Heaven it will be when down the blue dome
Flutter out the white signals that I'm coming home.

GOOD-BYE

The orchards hang heavy to the top of the slope—
God's peace on it all!—and the lagging feet grope
Back thro' flecked shade and sunshine to the gate-way's pent scope
Of all life holds dearest: the path pulling thro'
Hushed clover and grasses with first fruits astrew
Up the wind, past the brown grace of gardens—the blue
Bending warm—thro' the bushes, by the well-house, up to
The shed with the grapevine; up thro' doors swinging wide
To the dooryard beyond—there and there!—Oh, the pride
Of it all, the soft radiance, the glory, the crown;
The hands long since patient; the back bending down.
Soft splendors of dreams on the memories lie—
Heart of me! Life of mine! Hail and good-bye.

The banked blossoms blur and the path loiters now
For the tired feet, time-weathered brave old bare brow,
Embattled, eyes steady, breath clogged,—my heart, how
The throbs hurt!—God's patience; as He sends, or fallow or plow,
Toil, pain or privation. So with the pale prow
Pushing out from the brink only God's peace.

And now
The first call from the boat; and down from the mow
With its smell of new hay, from the ripening bough,
Come the tributes of forced fun, and eager feet ply
From garden to pantry.

Then the long lane's far cry:
"God keep you—Be good to yourself—so—Good-bye."

God keep you! The road bends. The lagging footfalls
Hush back into silence—the forced fun—the calls.
Does the door beckon white? Does the brave old brow wait
Embattled still, bare, just beside the old gate,
Eyes steady, this way?

My priest and my king!
How the dust hazes out—blurs and blots—and a-wing
The song of the thrush.

From the bars rattling down
In their shadow and sunshine, the pasture, tramped brown,
Stretches warm past the grapes, pausing green by the mound
With the chestnuts; across to the washout's old wound
With its clumps of sand grass; up the soft swinging slopes
To the woods coming down in massed phalanx to cope
With all comers. The birches gleam white where the crest
Wanders up thro' the wooddamps and wood smells to rest
In the sweep of the uplands.—God's sun always shines
On the upland.

And the beech-woods beyond, with the shrine
In its heart; the cathedral with the star reaching lift,
All pillar'd, green, misty, with the shadow's deep drift
Down dim aisles, with the pent sun's one striking red note
Thro' the heart of it all.

That call from the boat!
One sweep of the slopes swinging breathlessly by,
Lifting wistful as dreams in the late sun. Good-bye!

We plunge down the long hill, go zigzagging down
Under pines black with shadow—here the bank breaks out brown,
Breaks sheer from the roadway, clean up and sheer down—
Veering out under oaks that at outermost edge
Of the roadway grip down thro' the undergrowth's hedge
And across to the main hill, the big roots spreading bare
While the tough fibers catch at the flying feet where
The loam gullies out; down where gnarled apples stand,
Boughs bending, wide spreading, deep in white drifted sand,
Bearing brave as in first fruit.

Here the hill breaks out fair
From the chill of the shadow, running swiftly down where
The wild grape bells over the last pine and where
The blackberries catch and the junipers dare
The oncoming surge down the breast of the dune,
Drifting white down the sweep of the shore, overstrewn
With the half-buried drift; while wet and fresh piled
Lifts and falls the fenced drift from the last storm beguiled—
A bit of torn siding—It is green paint—a mast—
God pity the sea-folk ere that blow should be past.

The boat grows impatient—there goes the last call.
The sped engine rocks and the leased hausers fall
Splashing into clear water as the long pier moves back
With a rush of white water all down the green track,
And white faces beyond, all hushed now; fine and high
Flutter out the last signals—God keep you! Good-bye!

Swinging into the south, dipping low, piling high,
The hushed sunset glories a-swim; with the sky,

Clouds, bluffs, hour below us, and broad at our feet
The path to the low-hanging crumpled west beat
Into flame and crisp fire, at whose uttermost marge
Sinks, tawny thro' rag-smoke, the splendid lit targe
Of the sun.

Lo, the star!

Now the gray mists creep down
As the long piers run out from the lights of the town
And the bay, where, impatient, the great steamers wait
For their share of the cargo, while laggard and late
We creep down the slip, and the hurried trucks fly
Down the wet rocking gangways. The searchlight swings high
And the last line is off. The sea widens. Good-bye.

Thro' the black of the night and the bay, with the far
Ranging lights twinkling out thro' the sea-mists; the jar
Of wet decks—Our light picks up the buoy—with the damp
Breathing fresh, blowing chill; slowing down for the lamp;
We're out under the stars—

There's a tinkle of bells
Thro' the mists of the meadows; there are fine fragrant smells
From the kitchen's fed fire while the kept supper waits,
And the lighted pane calls to the feet that stray late.
The path from the doorway lies warm to the gate
And beyond.

And beyond? Ah, the pathway lies straight
Thro' the world to my feet, and the homing feet fly
And I kneel there tonight. Dear, there is no Good-bye.

LIFE ON THE LAKES

Down on the Beach

The storm-light fades from the cloud-banked west,
While the waves sing low;
A chill creeps down thro' the vague unrest,
And the pines stir slow.

The timbers drift high up the shore's broad breast
Where the piled sands blow,
And scant grasses climb in their wandering quest
Where the headboards show,
To their lonely watch by the stranger guest.

The moon hangs low.
An eagle floats high to his hemlock nest.
The far lamp glows.

Orders

It is in or out as the orders send,
Or hearthfires lure or risks attend.

The orders had come to the grey old town
From the upper camps with their corded browns
On the bare north hills where the blue lights drown—
By shanty and woodcamp winding down,
With door agape, while the broken pump
Leans out thro' the clearing's ragged clumps
Growing rank round the rotting and charred old stumps;
While the blossoms and berries and briers spread
From the sunny side of the fallen dead;
On down the sunny slopes where red
The sumach glows in the late sunshine

With the sassafras, while the wild grapevine
Bells down each sapling. A gaunt old pine
Lifts high, overlooked, on the blue skyline.
From bushes and bracken and scanty sod
Blaze black-eyed-Susans and goldenrod.

The woodroad curves thro' the arching green,
Then skirts round the edge of the big ravine,
Where hemlock and maple and oak still vie
In their upward lift to the bending sky;
Where the great grey boles of the taller beech
Gleam bare thro' the forest's twilight reach
In cathedral hush, while mists of green
Peep under and over and out between.

Then turning, we dip to the bridge and crawl
Thro' the bedded sands of the creek that sprawls
Round rushy clumps while the waters call;
Past the swamp's rank growth to the wooded wall
Of the creek's steep side where the needles fall.

Then up and out where the ploughed fields spread,
The corn's shocked gold, and the orchard's red;
And the bank stands sheer where the hummocks swell,
Starred with fall daisy and immortelle.

And so on down to the river's mouth
With its jam of logs, while, working south,
The great rafts swim as the cables reel
With the convoy passing—the smothered keel
Dipping low up the bay in the dying foam
To its berth in the slip, and so, safe home.

Thus the orders had come to the grey old town;
By copsewood and clearing winding down—

The loose-swung wires swinging overhead
To the wayside cross leading on ahead—
Past the shanty dumb and the woodcamp dead,
The bridge, and the ploughed fields and so on down
To the weathered wharves of the grey old town.

Outward Bound

The waters lap by the pier's green side
From the rippled bay;
Great hausers creak in the lifting tide,
Getting under weigh.
The shouts come quick and the last trucks slide
Down the slippery way,
Thro' the heaped-up gangway spreading wide.
In the twilight grey
The rudder swings as the lines creep home,
And the old boat turns,
Heading out for the mouth with its glimpse of foam
Where the great lamp burns.

The storm flag flies at the channel's end
In the leaden sky;
The storm light's creviced warning spends
As the colors die;
The lamp's red gleams at the pier's far end
On the ripples lie;
The spans leap far in their backward trend
To the white sand's cry.

"Coming!" "Coming!" "Coming!" The hoarse call wends
Where the hills fling high.
"Salute!" "We Salute!" "You!" The siren sends
So, going by.
And in or out, or force or fend,
The orders lie,

Or far or near, or risks attend,
Or signals fly.

"Coming!" "Coming!" "Coming!" Where the courses bend
Rounding handily,
Heading into the north at the outer bar,
Lying grim beneath,
Settling into the course with a muffled jar—
The bone in her teeth.

The dimming moon and the fading star
Touch the white foam-wreath.
The lamp swims fainter. The hills loam far
In ghostly sheath.

Storm

A chill creeps over the waters wide
As the night grows thick.
A roar swells down on the mist-bound tide
And ice flakes flick
At the pane as the red lure flits outside.

The fresh-trimmed wick
Peers out from the long decks battered sides
As the first waves lick
At the ragged keel, storm-blenched, wave-dyed.

The throbs come quick
As the storm swings down with mighty stride;
The ice glares thick
On gunwhale and railing, on cover and side,
On snug-lashed rick
Out on deck, up on top, piling high, spreading wide,
While the lashed spray pricks,

Blowing in from the deeps where the white caps ride,
And bare hands stick
Where, white tho' the drifted frosts deride,
The metals click.

Straining out—beaten back—tacking fresh—drifting wide—
She falters fixed,
Driving back on the bar while the foam sheets slide;
But the blurred rudder kicks
A safe channel back from the bar's wounded side
While the calls come quick
As the crew bend, braced, to the lines close-tied,
And numb hands pick
At ice-buried knots ere bare decks gleam wide
At the sailor trick,
And the gunwale lifts over the breaking tide
While the spent spray slicks
Down the treacherous way where the lookout guides.
Lo! A far star pricks,
And new snow flurries in pomp and pride
Where the light reels sick.

Forging out thro' the lift of the inner tide
With its deafening roar,
Pushing up round the Point, easing off, straining wide,
Where the great lamp scores;
"Coming!" "Coming!" "Coming!" Hark! The hills deride
Up the lonely shore.

Hold! The old boat reels as the trough yawns wide.
From the hull's great core,
Crash! Crash! Cra-ash! And the seams start wide
While the spent shaft gores

Thro' the splintering ribs of the battered old side
And ragged floods pour
Splashing up thro' the gloom where the piled cargo hides.
The fast-flooded floor
Flushes back thro' the firelight where the old engine rides
With its open-flung door.
"Coming, coming, coming, coming!" The hurt cry rings wide,
The hurt call sounds four!

Derelict

Driving back thro' the night on the lonely last ride
Swinging face to the fore,
"Coming—coming—coming"—
Tell how the brave old call died,
How the hushed minutes wore!

Passing out to the deeps, keeping there solemn tryst,
Going slowly by,
The lights gleam out thro' the murk and the mist,
Shining cheerily.
The ice flashes back from the white, snow-blocked lips,
Drifting dreamily,
And the piled decks blanch white as the red port-light dips,
Swaying heavily,
Or the wounded side gapes where the sated maw drips,
Lifting wearily.

Now the lights falter out as the great billows trip,
Fading mistily,
And the white mists close in as the spent spectre slips
Tired and trustingly,
Lingering by, lifting high thro' the storms white eclipse,
Hushed and wistfully.

Alongshore

The storm swings over the waters wide;
The whitecaps wheel on the surging tide;
While old ports wait grey, sea-swept and storm blown—
Fair harbors lie hidden while brave boats go down—
Wearing wearily out the blurring blind blast,
Waiting dumb for the morrow when the blow shall be past.

"Give me this"—"Can you get?"—"This is"—Click! cutting short,
Flashing back—*"So and so—just arrived—safe—in port—*
Says she spoke such and so, such an hour, and just where."
Calling loud, *"Answer port, any news from up there?"*
And the port answers back, *"No news yet—wires down."*
Swinging in from upshore, *"Such an one gone aground*
Just off such and such—breaking up—try to pick
Off the men—running high—going fast—getting thick."

Ay, Ay, Sir!

The wires lead back from the grey old town
By brier and bracken up the hillslopes brown;
Singing back thro' the pines to the creek that calls;
Crooning soft thro' the woodland where the dead leaves fall;
Humming low thro' the clearing where the sap creeps numb,
Past the woodcamps dead and the shanty dumb;
Singing back up the slopes with their fallen dead,
To the wayside cross leading on ahead,
Of the simple courage that does not die,
That has kept the faith, and the orders lie.

Down on the Beach

The glory floats up the radiant west
While the ripples lisp low;
The colors swim on the sea at rest
As the children row

Laughing into the sunset on a joyous quest
With their nets in tow.
The wrecked timbers drift up the shore's broad breast—
How the gnarled spikes show!
A torn ship's side rears its ragged crest
As the gaunt ribs throw
Aslant up the beach from the surges' wrest,
Where the great whins grow.

The scant grasses climb in their wandering quest
Where the headboards show,
To their lonely watch by the stranger guest.
The colors faint slow.
The moon looks down from the hemlock nest.
The far lamp glows.

Requiem

There's a far wet way to the journey's end,
A wide wild way ere the storm's spew spend.
There's a black blind way where the starred course bends,
There's a choked, charred way should the fanned fires rend,
A jagged, jutted way where the gaunt drifts trend—
But the sands lie soft and the grasses bend
Where the headboards show—Sleep well, my friend!

CONVOY

The smoke hung low on the sand-duned shore
And mist-bound tide;
No sun was there as the daylight wore
Nor light to guide,
And the lake lay hushed where the grain fleet bore
At eventide.

Signals sounded far out at sea
Thro' the merciless greys;
Foghorns bayed back lustily
Over truant ways—
But safety rode on that one—two—three!
And lengthened days.

The big barge forged on till the clamor stilled
Out of widening greys,
And only the far-off echoes spilled
Thro' the silences,
While the blind stars, safe in their courses, willed
Down the distances.

The Point juts far in its final throe
Toward the evening star;
And shallows spread wide ere the sea breaks snow
On the outer bar.
(It is three blasts for warning, and four blasts for woe—
So the signals are.)

'Twas double the ferry loomed, gliding in to
The lights of the town;
And double the lights ranged the waiting slip thro'
Where the moorings drown;
And the pattern dissolves to be fashioned anew,
Looking down.

The big ferry turned at the outer bar,
Swinging wide to sea,
Steaming into the south, calling long, sounding far,
Sending "One—two—three!"
To the sister ship where the shallows are,
Looming fixedly.

A message sounding far out at sea
As the long night wore;
A summons, sounding incessantly,
Sounding close inshore;
And out of the mists it was—"One—two—three!"
And back from the shallows—"Four!"

But 'twas blind thro' the greys of the starless sea,
While the long hours wore,
The big ferry sounded insistently,
Edging close inshore,
Sounded "Coming—coming—coming!"
So—"One—two—three!"
And nearer the answer—"Four!"

Now Danger, drunken with 'larums at sea,
On even keel
Skirts in toward the hulk looming heavily,
While the cables reel
Down the bar's long side, breathing sleepily,
As the shadows steal,
And it's "Hand across!" and the barge breaks free
Under straining wheel.

And it's double the lights on the homeward way,
Gleaming mistily;
Throb answering throb thro' the melting greys,
Humming drowsily;
While hearthfires beckon, and bounteous days
Bend luringly.

So, slow and slower—there the breakers creep
And dumb—
To the lamp's great heart, past the span's far leap
They come

Down the ranging lights where the moorings sleep,
Safe home!

Dear heart, if someday, somewhere, in the greys
Of life's further sea,
While the signals clamor down lengthened days
Hoarse minstrelsy,
As I grope toward the star, seeking sun-kissed bays—
Or shallows be,
Or the signal sound over truant ways,
Will you come to me?

Should the mists spreading far, grow strangely chill
And dumb,
While the changing wheel, half round, strains still
And numb,
And the bar, breast on, down the silence spills,
Will you come?

If out in the winding, wearying pall
The signal score,
Or in where the lamp's blurred message falls,
Sounding close inshore—
My friend, shall you answer should my soul's call
Sound four?

THRO' THE FOG

Down thro' the hills winding wearily down—
Nightmists and twilight and murk,
Breath of wet downlands where fallen gods frown,
Shadows that loiter and lurk.

Out from the hills rounding down, gullied deep—
Uplands of sumach and fern,

Whippoorwills calling from meadows asleep,
Dim, haunted vistas that turn.

White lift the walls clogged with bracken and log,
Winding on down to the sea;
Thro' the white glen drifting down thro' the fog
To a voice that is calling to me.

A stir thro' the mists and a freshening sea-chill,
White sands that whisper and moan,
Dark whins and sand-grass and drift-wood a-spill,
A light in the window, and home!

White grow the years, drift and rubble a-clog,
Wearing on down to the sea;
Nightmists and white drifting in with the fog,
And voices are calling to me.

Murmurous drifts and a freshening chill,
Lingering breath of brown loam,
Memories dear, dream-haunted, a-spill,
Light in the window—and home!

DARIEN

1513

The waves swing hushed to the blue sky-line,
A deeper blue. The headwind lags
To the foam a-lee, and the worn sheet runs
To the ventured top at the leap of the sun
Over the rim of the good round world
And its burst of shore; while bluff and fine
The hills fall back and the spent sea fags

At the rushy deeps, its slow wash curled
Up the soft salt ooze; with stray kelp-rags
A-lift on the green tide, rotting, a-scum,
Splotched with wandering sea-moss and stag,
Bleached and barnacled, shaggy, à-crumb,
A-stench up the wind where, mossy and burled,
The swamp's forest glooms, its deck heart a-thrum
With wild wings shot with flame.
Nosing back in, we come
Up the hushed channel-groove where the sky-line sags
In the blistering sun, and the dead sails lay
Their wrinkled length down the yard's pleached grey
Where the river widens to meet the bay.

Oh, the good brown shore, where the world stands still,
Stands, nor blenches for wind or sea;
Sovereign, girt, immovable,
Upreared, gripped, impregnable;
Where granite and rubble and good brown loam
Hurl back the embattled foam.

The good brown shore! And the world grows still;
Still, with murmurous wings and song
And odors drifting out, pungent and fine,
Out to the dip of the blue sky-line
From the deepening hill-slope's blessed stain
A length away by the anchor-chain
A-creak in the sun at the tide's in-fill.

The good brown shore—and for the three moons long
But the welter of winds and flux of sea
Over the rim of the new round world;
With creak of cordage and mast a-strain,
The tug of the storm, and the anchor-chain
Down the scarr'd side running out, steady and slow,
To the anchor answering far below.

And ever and alway by compass and star,
Under scud of cloud or a fleckless sky,
Bleach of moon and scorch of sun;
And the dead round wears to a new day won
Out to the rim of the new round world.
And "On!" from the bridge; and ever there be
But welter of winds and flux of sea.

Oh, the call of the shore and the brave sail furled—
The brave worn sail and mast and yard
And the gallant crew—
Oh, the ranging world
And the glad sky's blue,
With the wild crowds swirled
At the jetty's brink, with banners a-swing
In the outfilling breeze, with tossing plumes curled
Round the roadstead's white rim—O gay Spanish World!—
And the gold-throated trumpets the battle-lines fling
Up the massing, thronged quay for the King—for the King!

It is knee to the deck while the colors dip low;
There's the sword's blessed hilt—and the bellying sail
With all hands aloft to the yard's rich despoil,
Running out fold on fold to the rope's sure un-coil;
Drawing back, swinging out with the heartening gale
From the long cheer's far intone, the drawn undertow.

It is bowsprit and yard-arm; it is ratline and top;
It is mizzen and mainsail, top gallant and jib;
And our brave galleon bourgeons full-winged, prow a-lift
To the sweep of the surge, with the passing foam's drift
Fading shoreward; with deep-running shadows that lie
Close a-lee; while from taut-thridded mast-head thrown high,
Fly the pennons of Spain.
Straining on out, we top
The world's surer seas and, hull down, we drop

To new worlds far out-stationed, over far seas out-run,
Under far skies new-fashioned, in the lee of all time.

It is brave prow and swelling; it is crossbeam and rib;
It is sheet to the yard-arm, the rope's quick in-reel,
The call from the mast-head, the hand at the wheel,
The pull of the anchor—and beyond us the stars,
With the sure deck a-lift.

The swept sea's salt rime,
The sail's shadowed blue, the cloud's trailing dun,
For the eye color-worn; with the boats weathered scars,
And the shroud's patterned rest down the ratlines runged bars;
And the give of timbers, the wash of waves,
Or the long dead lift of the slow swell laves
The rudder, blind to the helmsman's cry.
And the stars beckon out to far seas that ring
New worlds and a world's work—great gifts for the King.

Three moons—and "Land!" and "Land!" and "Land!"
Oh, the good brown, warm brown, soft brown loam
And the welcoming kiss—or ever vows were,
The mother-heart, somnolent, never a stir
In the scorch of the noon.

The stirred dust floats high
From fretted feet crowding the long slope to stand
Breathing short, looking out from the swelling hill-comb;
Up from wicked wings whistling, fanged wet lands that try
At the sweating lines; up thro' marsh grasses a-foam
At mailed loins; out from fresh haunted shadows that call,
Perfumed, wistful, couchant; up thro' jungles a-clomb
Forward—bushed, barbed, embrangled.

And "On!" to the wall
Of the rubble-strewn steep, where the cropped boulders die
In red granite, a-ridge, a-spur, seamed and scarred,
A-scale, toiling upward.

And "On!" So the quest
Upreared, flings defiance; and the red Divide rests,
Stops on guard, looking out, halting Time's spurred on-wrest;
Yields, reluctant, encompassed.

And, crest breaking crest—
Her centuried secret outblazoned, confessed—
The old world swings, double!

And down the wide West
Sinks untrod and unworn,
Spreads uncloven, untorn,
To the waiting white sands rimmed below, and a-lee,
Hangs new-born, uncradled, the limitless sea;
Waits the uncharted, the unsailed, the unwakened sea;
Sweeps again the enchanted, the fair sunset sea.

It is brave view and swelling, and the colors up-flung;
It is proud stroke and compelling, and the brave swords up-swung;
And known world or guessed,
Or worn world or west
To the uttermost shore, elfin islands a-nest,
While the sister shores ever the sister seas ring;
So fair worlds and fruited—our gift to the King!

1913-1914

There's the creak of cordage and mast a-strain,
With urgency swinging the breaking load
A-clomb, forward; so the great strides go,
With the sweating lines toiling far below
To the Plan's hard pace at the Cut's in-fill.

So the work. While, the circuited seas to gain,
The world sits foreshortened, the focal road
Down the waiting world-rim, fore-shadowed, fore-run.

So the work wears idle and the day grows still;
Still, with wash of waters that run
Under world-banners massing in line
Out to the dip of the blue sky-line.

It is gun speak gun—and sea meets sea;
The trumpet's throat—and sea greets sea;
(Or dreamed this dream, Balboa's men?)
And the ranging hills swing ajar, and then,
The double world grows one—at Darien!

PEACE AND WAR

THE PATH OF GOLD
PEACE AND WAR
THE LONG TRAIL
NEWARK
TO THE MASTERS OF 1917
TO YOU WHO WENT

THE PATH OF GOLD

Dawn on the world's new shores. The path
Of rippled gold runs straight, runs fine,
In from the sun-touched, lifting water-line;
Straight in across the waking dawn-burst sweet,
To break at last at eager flying feet
Threading the uplands wild, uncloistered, free.

Dawn on the world's new shores. The path
Of gold runs straight, runs rippled and runs fine,
In from the cold, dark, moving water-line;
Runs under white sails coming with the dawn,
In to the new shores beckoning on
To Freedom's right and opportunity.

Dawn on the new world-shores. A path
Of gold runs straight, runs steady, and runs fine
Straight back across the threatened water-line;
Back under the star-served, waiting battle-line;
Runs minted, red, out to the new world-dawn,
Out to a new world-dream and beckoning on
To Freedom's right and opportunity—
O path of gold to human destiny!

PEACE AND WAR

Peace upon the wide-flung country-side.
Peace upon the rain-washed, spring-flushed tide
Of soft baby-grasses unafraid, untrod,
Lifting to the long hill's up-turned sod;
The little crooning country-roads that wind at will
To meet the stately highway. From the upper hill
The call to prayer. Soft and sweet and south
The breath of morning. At the gully's mouth
The bank slopes warm to the ringed-in pool

Where the stallion whinnies and the first black foal
Nuzzles for food. The sun shines down
On the bare wet woods banked deep in browns
Where the dead twig snaps and the first birds call
To the weathered rick at the further wall
Where the pasture ends, and the orchard trees
Beckon back home. The hum of bees
Comes from the long shed. The wood-smoke's blue
Twists over grey roofs calling to
The barn's red warmth, swept clean, swung wide—
Peace upon the whole sweet countryside.

Peace upon the spring-flushed, the smoke-grimed town;
Fringed and feathered column'd smoke, the portentous frown
Of Toil rapt, busied, giving heart and brain—
Back from the black mouths the red fires stain;
The long deep wet shaft, gloom on gloom;
The shining whirling mad machines, loom on loom;
But, back from forge and furnace comes the sure release,
And over shaft and over whirring bobbins, peace.

Peace upon the wave-swept, the tide-swung sea.
Peace upon the white sails spreading merrily.
Peace upon the great deeps. The tide's long flume
Flushes up the channel. The white salt spume
Eddies to the grey pier's wounded, weathered side;
Slips along the great hulls, sailing with the tide;
The heaving rocking merchantmen getting under weigh;
The little boats that slip between and scurry up the bay.
Peace upon the headlands with the sea-winds blowing free,
Peace upon the harbor-side and peace upon the sea.

Borne upon the dewy breath of early morning, *War!*
Crashing from the swift white wires comes the summons, *War!*
The stately highway rolling back to meet the little towns,
Calling up the hillslopes, the bare woodland browns,

The silent little country roads, the startled upper hill,
Across the straight black furrows to worn feet standing still—
The fallen plough at the furrough's end—the barn's wide store,
The stallion's plunge and whinney, the white face at the door!

Men—men—wanted—men!
Cavalry, infantry, scouts and spies;
Gunners, sappers—the mine's surprise;
Wagon-men and the sure supplies;
Wanted—men!

Bursting thro' the colum'd smoke, breaks the message, *War!*
Forge and furnace fires redden with the summons, *War!*
Down the long deep wet shaft darkens, gloom on gloom;
Swift the whirling sick machines rush, loom on loom;
Weft and shine of trappings, fittings—woof and dun of stress;
Plate, projectile, bore and pivot, volatile duress;
Lead and sulphur, rubber, copper, iron's molten crown—
Ugly, cruel, cataclysmic War upon the town.

Men—men—wanted—men!
Lever and level, flight and range;
Engineer, mechanician, charge and change;
Surveyor, signal-man, flash and exchange;
Wanted—men!

Sounding down the great deeps, calling, calling, *War!*
Breaking from the harbor side comes the summons, *War!*
Calling from the wave-swept, the tide-swung sea,
Calling to the white sails spreading hastily;
Calling to the battle-fleets massing line on line,
Sister ships far over sea, trimming fit and fine;
Calling from the grey piers wounded, weathered side—
Dark hulls stored with contraband coming with the tide;
Fast war-loaded merchantmen getting under weigh;

Mine, torpedo, submarine, out and down the bay.
War upon the headlands with the sea-winds blowing free,
War upon the harbor-side and war upon the sea.

And,

Men—men—wanted—men!
Young men, clean men, the call's parade;
Dash and danger and the game up-played;
Swift, sufficient, and unafraid—
Wanted—men!

THE LONG TRAIL

Outward Bound

Out on the long trail. The foam drifts back
With the dim shore-line down the out-bound track
Over greener waters lifting on ahead
To the watching bridge and the plunging lead;
To the wheel's sure turn and the answering screw,
With the chart's new stars lifting on the blue;
Out to fair new shores with their fathers' God,
To tread out new paths as their fathers trod—
These pioneers.

The Pioneers

Thro' the breaking wood
The road crawls slow to the clearing's rood.
The roof-tree bends by the forest spring
While the axes glance and the rifles ring.
The garden smiles and the posies blow
Down prim straight paths, turf-set, that go
Thro' the brave new pickets' low cloistering
Out to wood-paths shyly adventuring;
Or to the stile's loud hail while the swift surprise
Leaps with the welcome to tear-dim eyes
And eager glad hands—for folks have come!

Clatter of kettles; the laugh and hum
Of news and views; and the hollow throat
Of the chimney roars to a glad new note.
The table calls to thicket and hive,
To rafter and shelf. So the glad tongues give
To the hushed afternoon. To the further field
The idle feet move; the proper yield
Duly apportioned, these silent men
Retrace to the sheds, the barns; and then
Quiet feet turn to the sheltered lane
That leads to the churchyard. The shadows strain
Down the breaking road. The sunlight falls
On headstones guarding the years' recall,
And the wild-rose blows in the scented air
With the bending, lifting grasses there
Warm, soft and sweet.—Ah, the years are long
Since they went away!
But sure and strong
The new years beckon. It is haste and good-bye;
Hand and hand, heart to heart, lip and lip, eye and eye,
And the folks are gone.
But the forest spring
Answers gay voices re-echoing
Where the children call, while book and pail
Speak of spent sessions—a hungry hail
Sounds at the doorway. It is water and wood,
The feeding, the milking, for litter and brood
Sure care and protection. The low roof bends
Above the home-circle; the steaming food sends
Its call thro' the evening, the perfume, the dew,
To shadows at twilight—grey shapes stealing thro'
Forest deeps, with the collie at bay. Timbered bars
Drop into strong sockets; evening prayers; and the stars
Drift above—thro' the years resting not, swinging on;
Evenings' rest, midnights' dreams, daybreak, and the dawn
With its call to new days.

The Mountain Wall

The long trail calls!
It is out and over the mountain wall.
Stubborn the fight for the crowded pass—
The sheer swift fall, the boulder's mass;
The night's sick howl, the sleepless tread;
The blue wood-smoke and the campfire's red,
With the covered wagon drawn near the blaze,
The harness at hand, while the halter plays
A length away where the restless feet
Startle the thickets and, sudden and fleet,
Small woodland wild things scurry. Afar
The hoot of the owl. Thro' the treetops a star.

So the pass is won; and the ridges leap
Away below into swing and sweep,
With cradled valleys rich and warm
Whose festal promise out-weighs the storm.
New walls lift fair and home-lights glow;
Marigolds bourgeon and touch-me-nots blow
From the open door. The orchards swing
Up the nearer slopes and the harvests ring
With gold the valley. The long-drawn sheds
Murmur of comfort, the majestic tread
Of lordly stallions, of herds that pass,
Where the slopes sink down to the long blue grass.

But the snows come soon and the snows lie late.
The corn stands nipt and the blazing grate
Speaks of black frost. The cattle low
In the scanty stalks and the spent ricks show
The huddled sheep; while far and white
The snows drift deep thro' the closing night.

The Corn Lands

And the corn-lands call! The long, long trail
Leads down to the flat-boat's clumsy flail
And the river-floods carry with broadening sweep
To the corn-belt's rim, with, dense and deep,
The slough's rank growth where the prairie-grass
Waves above horse and rider, and the mud morass
Sinks black, hub-deep. So mile on mile
The long trail flounders. But the prairies smile
From the dawn of day to the setting sun
And day on day till the weeks are run.
And ever the winds blow strong that pass
The bending, lifting prairie grass,
Starred and thick-set with blossom of weed,
Barbed and edged ranks of spike and reed,
Till the healing breath steals far and fine
From the soft blue haze of the timber line.

The Timber

Hickory and walnut, the thicket's mass,
Pennyroyal and sassafras;
And giant boles lift to a bluer sky
Near hidden waters running by,
Where great oaks hold the demesne in fee
And the wild grape swings out fitfully.
Wild plums climb up the bank's steep fall
To the creek's clear ford, and woodbirds call
With the woodland breath, loam-fresh, sun-sweet,
Thro' open glades to splashing feet.

The Prairie Fire

So the summer is done. Then high and higher
The flame and roar of the prairie fire
Swifter than wings, with, charred and black,

The mad wild flight; while the dry roots crack
Incessantly in the creeping blaze
Left far behind the plunging plays
Of wind-tossed grass, till the ditches meet
The back-fire's stifling, scarred retreat.

The Prairie Farm

Under the lifting ridges of smoke
The fields stretch black. But the prairie-folk
Year-wise, regardful, provident, see
The promise; and the whistling plough breaks free
Thro' the swelling sod breaking wet and black
In the autumn rains, while the burnt roots crack,
And the turned new earth, black row on row,
Springs stript for service. The glad hopes grow
Thro' winter drifts. With a new year born,
Stretches mile on mile on mile of corn.

The farmhouse stands and the roses blow
In the world-wide way that roses know,
Under cherry-trees. The flower-beds swarm
Knee-deep round the enclosure, guarded and warm,
Where the garden is. The orchard trees
Hang full to the pasture. The hum of bees
Speaks from the clover. The pasture bars
Fall with the dusk. Under early stars
Bare feet come slowly up the long home lane
In the soft warm dust, while the cows complain
Of thirst and need at the barnyard gate
While the watering-trough spills and the milk-stools wait.
Faint thro' the late dusk, parched and brown,
The church-bells come from the distant town;
And from up at the tank, a luminous star,
The headlight roars down with its thundering jar.

The chores and the day's work are done at last
And sleep, toil-won, deep-breathed, dream-fast,
Is come—is come!

The Gold Rush

Now it's gold and gold!
In the rocks, in the sands, in the grass-roots' hold,
Where the canyons gape and the mountains stand;
And the long trail leads to a rich new land,
Thro' wind-swept spaces, scant of beast or bird,
Thro' sage-brush and cactus—the shy wild herd
In mad flight swinging to the sheltering butte—
And the great plains pass. The chosen route
Breaks into foothills where the fresh springs run
By the prairie-schooner, and the camp is won.

It is pocket and placer, lode and lead,
The miner's kit and the miner's creed:—
"Fair to your neighbor; the claim close-drawn;
Help to the needy and pass it on."
And ever the lonely cabin goes
Up the gorge, down the gulch, where the mineral shows
And we strike it rich.

The Range

Or the dull gaze lifts
To the mountain valleys, where fine and swift
Leap visions of wealth and home and pride,
Where the great slopes call and the cow-boys ride
To the herd's stampede; or the wider range
Of slope on slope winding steep and strange
To newer lands, till the peaks fall free
To warmer crests with their glimpse of sea.

The Summer Sea

And the long trail sleeps by the summer sea,
Where summer fruitage hangs endlessly
Thro' somnolent years, and the perfumed breeze
Calls to new harbors world-argosies.

Calling the Children Home

So the long trail sleeps. But fast and far
Reverberates "War!" and "War!" and "War!"
Rumours and reckonings and summons that come—
Mother-mine calling the children home!

Answer

From the clearing's scope in the breaking wood,
The sunny lane where the headstones brood,
From the mountain valley's scarr'd retreat,
Rallies the sure roll of marching feet.
Over the prairie's miles of corn
The mountain sky line, jagged and torn,
The sweep of range, the summer sea,
The long trail swings back endlessly.
Back from treading new paths as their fathers trod,
Back from new shores with their fathers' God,
The sons swing back, blood of pioneer!
Silent men marching, war-trapt, severe,
Facing the dawn, unafraid, they come—
The motherland is calling the children home!

NEWARK

1666

Sunset on the hills; with dark below,
The wooded slopes. The evening glow
Blinds where the river-flood runs wide,
Lifts pink and pearl from the other side;
And the woods run down to the splendid stain
Of the river-brim to live again.

One lone canoe drifts idly by
With the sure stroke sweeping back fitfully,
Presaging portents dire and black
From the tangled reaches of Hackensack.

The slopes stand bare on the darker side
Where the clearing spreads, brave, clean and wide,
And the timbers pile in close redoubt
Near where the home-lights twinkle out.

The new post held, the new vows sworn
In the old, old faith—and the town is born.

How the spirit kindles, how greatly goes
Thro' urgent years, the Passaic knows.

1766

A flame thro' the whole great countryside.
The spirit carries as the news runs wide,
Unhurried news of wind and tide—
A feathered prow passes the wharf's long bar
Where the crowded masts of the shipping are—
Of orders coming from oversea,
Of imposts levied wrongfully,
Of tribute demanded of loyalty.

Lo, patriot, rebel and mutineer;
Muster of sloop and privateer;
And, deaf to the urge of amity,
To the arts and crafts of diplomacy,
It is *"Tyranny—tyranny—tyranny!"*

How the spirit blazes, how greatly goes
Thro' troubled years, the Passaic knows;
Grappling the issue with immortal peers,
O little town of one hundred years!

1866

The dying roar of artillery.
A nation, torn, in her agony;
One nation, smiling in her agony.

The long grey lines have all swung south,
Worn, proud, unbroken. From river-mouth,
From inlet, from roadstead, the boats go by.
One flag flies in the freedman's sky.
Blue lines passing, mute and worn have come
Home to the peace of the north hills—home.

The shipping crowds the lower bay.
New duties call—the greater play
Of Love's great heart of forgivingness;
Wrongs that Right must needs redress;
And civic growth and righteousness.

How the spirit carries, how greatly go
The earnest years, we and the Passaic know;
Scanning the stars, blood of elder seers,
O city of two hundred years!

Sheeted gas flaring down the hard-fought field,
Gouts of white lead, tuns of bursting steel,
Chaos of shells. The thunders sound
Fainter thro' caverns deep underground
Where the trenches hold. Time's conquests fall,
Smashed back and back with each interval.
It is hell gone mad; nor shift of grace
Rallies the hurt cry of helplessness.

Merciful seas cool the hurts that drown;
Unarmed non-combatants homeward bound,
Liner and transport going down.

And
For wanton display of efficiency,
For craven insistence of urgency,
There is *"Butchery!" "Butchery!" "Butchery!"*

World-thunders threaten down untrod ways,
Banners are flying thro' anxious days.
How the years shall carry the spirit's spell
Down abysmal years, the years will tell.

O city of visions memorial,
Back thro' the years, perennial,
Or dark or light—
How the common tongue
Swung glib the name of Washington,
Knew Talleyrand, spoke LaFayette;
Cornwallis spits anathema yet!

The nation born, the common mass
Knew royalty, saw statesmen pass;
Guessed trouble brewed, applauded France,
Appraised the heir of circumstance.

Now the nation grown past her infancy,
Argued of party, of polity;
Or suspicion scotched into bitter hate—
Delinquency made desperate—
Answered Lincoln and measured Lee
Where Gettysburg grappled with destiny.

You, too, have seen in a larger dawn
A world-empire wheel up San Juan,
Break into foam as the seas spurt red
Were it Sampson or Schley or Dewey led.
Now world-thunders threaten down untrod ways,
Banners are flying thro' anxious days.

City of visions memorial,
Back thro' the years perennial;
You who have heard with your ships at sea,
The rattle and roar of artillery;
Who have heard in the thunders, north or south,
Your heroes named by the cannon's mouth;
Name now your glorious company,
And name the glorious company
That Peace has linked with liberty.

City of visions! What dreams shall glow,
Shall live, the Passaic may not know
Where just beyond, the future dips
To the nations' dream-apocalypse,
O city of vision, whose spirit steers
Thro' fifty and two hundred years!

TO THE MASTERS OF 1917

The task is done. The student look
Bends anxiously to a newer book,
Where the torn and blotted page runs red,
And each stamped line runs stark with dead,
As a world's wounds gape in agony
And the spent current drips out slenderly.
And the new task waits where fire-lit lands
Wait sore the touch of master hands;
Wait sore the spirit of Galilee,
The Master's touch and sympathy.

The new task, masters. Yours to be
Of the world-work; chrism of agony
Or the spirit's touch and sympathy,
Till dreams lift fair over dumb, charred lands—
Fabric that speaks of master hands—
Till the page glows white where the page runs red,
With the stars' requiem for the line's stark dead,
And the blue bends hushed, brave and comforted.

This the task, O masters new-panoplied,
By the touch of the Master sanctified.

TO YOU WHO WENT

Out on the quest, O you who went,
Out on the quest magnificent.
Out to the call and faring on
Up far wide fields in the great white dawn
Of a world's new day; with the student look
Lifted but late from the half-thumbed book—
The clean young page and the thought unsaid,
The leaf uncut and the page gone red.
Out to the call, O you who went,
And the call's dear cost, we who are sent—

The call's dear cost should ignorance guide,
Courting a fall should incompetence ride.
We, too, have dreams and we give them all
As we give them once does the splendid call.
And splendid the wash of ripe young blood;
And splendid the petty borne bravely, the mud;
And splendid the failing high faith. Hark, the drum!
Marching a million strong, we come
Out on the quest, we who are sent,
With our faith and our dreams to you who went.

And thine the call, O Humanity,
As thine the sweat and the agony.
And we shall win, so right is right
And God is God. And each hurt flight,
Each hell-swept field, each gulping sea
Is spelling out *"Victory!" "Victory!"*
By each white dawn's ooze, each death-sweat thin
Is building the blood-song, *"We win!" "We win!"*

So good our cause, O you who went!
So fine the quest, we who are sent!

MEMORIES

VIGNETTE FROM MEMORY
THE ROCK PILE
VICARIOUS
FATHER'S GOOD SON
I WISH YOU JOY
I GIVE YOU PEACE
SPRING WILL COME
THE FUMFAY AND THE MOON
THE OLD FARM

VIGNETTE FROM MEMORY

The late dusk settles heavy thro'
The hushed hot air,
Down thro' the tall, tall treetops to
The dark nook where
The ivy sobs across the night;
Nor lingers there,
But creeps along the grasses—white
The blossoms wear.

And heavy hang the odours in
The closing day,
As phlox and pale petunias win
The right of way
Across the flower-beds' tangled brim
And winning, stray
Along the path in broadening sweep
And circle by
The open door where thick vines sleep
And, sleeping, sigh
At wing of humming-bird or leap
Of dragon-fly.

Dark grey the walls have settled, of
Weathered pine;
And grey the low roof bends above,
But dipping fine
As need is, where, with frantic shove
The old chain swing
Gloats high—to die in sudden shrove's
Hushed whispering!

The shadows gather dark along
The yielding floor
Where Toil waits, heavy-eyed, among

The household store
For hush of pain-wracked silence wrung
From struggle sore.
But the fine faith clings thro' the changes rung:
The day is o'er—

The sapping noon, the fretted way,
And dusk's faint rim;
The blurring field, the girding stay,
And twilight dim;
The far clear call, the years' prepay,
Lo, the guerdon grim—
The spear's upthrust, the thorn's crowned play,
The chalice brim.
But the fine faith sings down the dusk's far way
Through the evening dim,
"Or the cup, or the call, or the thorn's crowned play,
Lead after Him."

The odours wander dreaming thro'
The hushed, hot air,
Across the greying grasses to
The doorstep where
The damp curls left to the upturned cup
Of the long, long day;
The troubled wonder looking up
The starlit way—
The hushing grey and the greying hush
Of long grey years;
The call of the night and the slow blind rush
Of hushed, hot tears;
The glimmering gleam of days that dream
And nights that sob;
The pride that prompts, the hopes that teem,
The hurts that throb.

The odours dream thro' the grim grey flush
Where the great white Death
Keeps watch within the shadows. Hushed
The sobbing breath
Of clinging, frightened dreamer crushed
To cheek fresh wet,
With the falling sleeve, slow swaying, brushed
By draped jaconet.

In the shadow's hush the calm pale brow
Its vigil keeps;
And, "Father's resting quiet, now,
And Baby sleeps.
The poor, poor feet are tired, too,
Are they clean, all clean?
Mother's waiting now for you—
Come, child, come in."
The night hangs close by the curtain's bars
To wait the dawn;
While, arched above, the waiting stars
Are shining on.

The years fade out in the winding greys
Of life's far rim,
With the upthrust's scar, the thorn's crowned play,
The chalice brim,
With the call of the fields, the years' prepay—
And Night sets in.

The odours dream by the curtained bars
For break of dawn;
In the arching hush the shining stars
Are waiting on.
The throbbing hurt of the silences
Its vigil keeps;

And, "Is my father resting? Does
The baby sleep?"
A grey roof bends by the starlit way—
"Oh, they're clean still, clean—
But Mother, O my Mother, may
I come in?"

THE ROCK PILE

Here is the rock-pile; so, blow on blow,
Crevice and cleavage, and the new rock row.
Over us breathes out the heart of the spring,
Earth-smells and wood-calls and wood-cries a-wing,
Fresh rain and warm sun. In the uppermost reach
A bobolink calls from a topping bare beech.

This is the rock-pile; the new rock row.
Into the thick of it, blow on blow!
The joy of the working—swing and swing—
The heave and lift, and the shock and ring,
As sledge strikes steel; how the piled blocks show!
High and higher lifts the new rock row.

The joy of the working—yea—blow and blow;
Lo, the sweep of the far flung new rock row!
The upward sweep and the downcast eye—
The voice of authority going by.
What does it matter—swing and swing—
While the sun shines warm and the bluebirds sing,
Who gets the praise? Ho, blow on blow,
Sweep and swing for a new rock row!

Here comes the new load—steady—so—
Into the thick of it, blow and blow!
Force and fit to the flung new line,
Crevice and cleavage, fronted and fine.

Tired? Come closer—so—two and two;
Into it, swing for it, batter it thro'!
Steady—we're coming—now, blow and blow;
Courage, dear heart, we know—we know—
How brave and fine sweeps the flung rock row.

Passing, they're passing where the highways run,
And the shadows chill with the setting sun.
More loads? And more loads? The strokes swing slow.
Do the birds sing? I do not know.

VICARIOUS

The price? Youth laughs and life is very good—
World-dreams and beckoning; what has been, may be done;
And work, and work, and work, and greatly won
And fine, man's great achievements. Ah, but could
The wings out-spread to the vision's sweep, then would
Proud Time stand reverent, and the gladdened sun,
Rich in new quests, so tell them, every one.

Dreams! And the call for whom the call has stood
Arming and armed. The breaking way and dim;
Hewing a highway, making straight for him
Who rides to dreams, the conqueror faring on—
Daybreak, high noon, and eve at Babylon.

Here in the roadside's wash, your hewers of wood
Demand of you, our great one, that you make good.

FATHER'S GOOD SON

The wheat hangs heavy to the further hill.
The corn stands clean along the level land.
The ditches run. The orchard's full demand
Of brave new wood is met, and the trimmed boughs spill
Their summer fragrance, with the thwarted will
Fruited to purpose; and all the low rebel land
Subdued.

And he has come. On the tan-brown hand
The ring of sonship. The sobbing throat has skill
To charm the old man's soul and eager brain,
This Prodigal, lapped round in robes of state.
It is burning sands, thronged streets, and tropic stains,
Dark eyes and breath of perfume.
The idle laugh
Runs around the spit where turns the fatted calf.

I WISH YOU JOY

I wish you joy—the little things that go
To fleck with foam the happy cup, to thrill
The swelling brim and sweet in flood to spill
In bubbles down; the way the cherries know
Up black bare boughs, the new corn row on row,
The vagrant path, cloud-shadows on the hill,
The lighted pane, the closing day and still,
Larkspurs and dew, the blue lights on the snow.

I wish you joy—the deeper stir at call:
The vision's gleam and white souls measured up
Flare back and back from shining, ringing wall
In sacrament—a chalice be your cup!
Nor lees there be; but alabaster's sweet
Shall pour in deathless odours at your feet.

I GIVE YOU PEACE

I give you peace; sunset and afterglow,
The moon above the meadows, homing feet
Of little ones at the gate, a quiet street
And late October—soft the red leaves go
Above a coffin'd face.
I do not know
That life shall call where hushed the currents meet,
That skies shall smile, and warm banks passing sweet,
A grey roof and the stars.
It may be so
That shores shall beckon far and in the west
The stormlight's red above a sullen sea,
The troubled waves out-breaking endlessly.
So it but be back from the storm-king's wrest
The brave bare poles shall sing thro' the dying foam
To the grey pier's side, the waiting lamp, and home.

SPRING WILL COME

The sun called down to the northwind "Back!"
Now spring will come.
The prairie sprawls big, wet, and black,
Oh, spring will come!
Who cares now for winter's snowing?
There's a smell of green things growing;
Soon the blossoms will be blowing down the ice-king's track—
When spring has come.

There's a flash of red from that tall tree top;
Oh, spring will come.
A tiny gleam of purest white—the first snow-drop;
Oh, spring will come!
Who cares now for winter's sleighing?
Early mud means early Maying;

Father and the boys are praying that this rain will stop
Ere spring does come.

The frogs croak hoarse over in the big slough;
Oh, spring will come!
A dash of rain and the sun breaks through;
Oh, spring will come!
Who cares now for hailstones skirling?
The rushes bend to the eddies curling;
A breath—and lo! the flag uncurling its petals blue
Oh, spring will come!

There's a flirt of rain and a drift of light;
Oh, Spring will come!
The cherries have burst green, waxen, white;
Ah, Spring *has* come!
Who cares now for March winds roaring?
Dews and moonlight round her pouring,
April, teary, love-imploring, stands a bride tonight,
And Spring has come!

The bluebirds are building in the big front gate,
Now Spring has come;
And some one whistling up the lane calls "Kate"!
Ah, Spring has come!
Who cares now for east wind fretting?
"Co, Boss, co! How late it's getting"!
But the world bursts pink for Robin letting down the bars, says, "Wait"!
And Spring has come!

THE FUMFAY AND THE MOON

A little fumfay fell in love with the moon—
With the august, the glorious, the only moon;
While his radiant glory filled
Sky and cloud and softly spilled
Thro' the twilight,
Thro' the starlight,
Down thro' dews and dreams of midnight.
The shadows shrank close to the hill's dense side,
And the winds blew soft o'er the silver tide
Of the meadows a-ring
With the blue-bells a-swing—
It was all for the fumfay, for she, poor thing,
For she was in love with the moon.

The elves trooped down from the hill's dense side,
And the fays whirled aglee o'er the meadows wide;
While the breath of blossoms swung
Sank and eddied, rose and flung
O'er the upland,
Down the fenland,
Perfume—magic balm of elfland.
Oh, prince of goodfellows was Robin, who wooed
In the wildest, the maddest, most fantastic mood,
The little fumfay,
But she answered him nay,
With a toss of her wee head for she, so they say,
For she was in love with the moon.

The fair, stately river swept down to the sea;
Resistless the current—"My love, come to me"!
Hark! The salt sea's welcome roar.
Wait! The sandbars stretch before.
And the ebb-tide
From the bar's side

Rolled defiance—there, that hope died!
But the river, heart-broken, wore still in her breast
Love's likeness, love's token, while far in the west
Set the moon, sad and old;
Had his love then grown cold
For the fair stately river? For she, I am told,
For she *was* adored by the moon.

A loyal old fellow was Robin the Good;
The shadows swept out from the still, solemn wood;
Hope's mirage, fast fading, swung
O'er the meadows; Mem'ry flung
O'er the upland,
Down the fenland,
Odors from a far-off dreamland.
But the fumfay, heart-broken, saw only the moon—
The desolate, dying, all unconscious moon.
"My great love, my own,
My"—There, he was gone!
And life's lonely pathway stretched darkly, I own—
But she'd been in love with the moon!

THE OLD FARM

Oh, the old, old farm, and the old farm's joys!
Its meadows and its pastures where we played when we were boys;
Its garden-patch that kept us pulling weeds and hoeing corn—
And retiring to the river, bruised by stone and pierced by thorn.

Oh, the old barnyard and the barnyard gate,
Where with breath all clover-laden, the milk-cows used to wait;
Where the horses wheeling from it, sent them back a lusty neigh,
And the chickens cackled thro' the dust to get out of the way.

Oh, the old gray barn and the old barn door,
That swung upon its iron hinges, forty years or more;
That ope'd before the sunrise and closed at twilight's fall,
As the milk-cows moved sedately to the milk maid's call.
Oh, the old hay-mow and the old straw stack,
With the hickory sapling stripped across its great broad back;
With the young calves cuddled in the sun, but which refused to stay
While the children hunted for the nests the hens would hide away.

Oh, the old farmhouse on the long, long lane,
Down which the children wandered and ne'er came back again;
With its trees and bushes 'round it, its vines and flower-beds,
Where the maiden-blush blushed faintest pink, the poppies furious red.

And the orchard—oh, the orchard, with its wealth of blossom sweet,
Its cherries and its berries and its shade in July's heat,
When the butterflies were chasing other butterflies as fleet,
And the honey-bee and hornet claimed the clover at your feet.

And the broad cornfields and the corncribs high,
With their manifest temptations to the pig-pens nigh;
The farmer's implements and tools all lying round at will
In the barnyard, barn and meadow; in the yard the cider-mill.

Twilight settles down upon it. Dews are falling; silence reigns;
And night's mighty, haunting sorrow pulsates thro' the halting strains
Of the katydids and crickets to the great gold star of eve,
As the farmer's children seated on the hayrack softly weave
All those glorious, golden fancies, only hope and childhood can
As they wrestle with the problem, "What I'll do when I'm a man."
But the evening chores are finished and Father, gaunt and thin,
Rises from the open doorway, calling, "Come now, boys, come in"!

Father by the rocker yonder; Mother just across the room;
With the moonlight falling softly, oh, so softly, thro' the gloom,
As they kneel to ask God's blessing on the dear group kneeling there,
On the loved ones long since scattered, on God's people everywhere.

Oh, that moonlight hushed and holy; oh, the prayers each night; the tears
When the boys rode down the long, long lane. Thro' the haze of vanished years
God's peace still rests upon the farm and father, gaunt and thin,
Across the twilight's dusk and grey, still calls, "Come, boys, come in"!

GOD'S WEATHER

JANUARY

Up the whitening blue, as the day-star grows dimmer,
The big sun bursts breathless, a boisterous swimmer,
While pallid and vibrant the grouped sun-dogs glimmer.

The forest branch snaps where the forest path darkens;
The hunted breath whitens as forest ears hearken;
And the piled snow, leaning over, the great boughs outweighing,
Puffs out thro' the dim woods, jarr'd down by our sleighing.

The great snowfields creak over deep-crusted heather,
Across to my high-pillar'd hearth-fire's sure tether,
And life wells as sleighbells and joybells together
Whip out a mad peal to just weather—God's weather.

FEBRUARY

The hid sun strikes red thro' the low eaves' slow dripping,
Thro' the long day's dark downpour to the rain-butt's full lipping;
On leaning limp trellis, on long wet boughs dipping,
On lee ice a-wash, on the spent snow's swift slipping,
On the barques in the ditches the bubbles outstripping.

In the chill of the twilight, the clumped grasses listen.
In the glitter of starlight the white hoarfrost glistens.
And a new earth, white, waxen, thro' the purple dawn spaces,
Lifts crystal and stardust in gossamer graces—
All elfland and gnomeland and homeland together—
God's breath in the night and His weather, God's weather.

MARCH

A wild whir of wings thro' the woodland's browns hieing;
A scurry of furry things, tossed windrows flying;
A flurry of raindrops; the far wild geese crying—
First-fruits of the spring time.

968651A

The whirling gust billows
Dead drifts over logs deep in hushed mossy pillows,
Whips across the black pools with their banked sodden willows.
And furred thing and whirred wing and woodcries together,
The windrow and we—all the wild things together—
Blow on thro' the woods and the weather, God's weather.

APRIL

The shadows fall soft down the haw-whitened hillside;
The south wind blows soft over blossoms at full tide;
With the evensong out from the thicket's throat thrilling,
With the fragrance of springtime and pink petals spilling
From the orchard's heart ever, with orchard boughs lifting
Above baby grasses, with cloud blossoms drifting
Over limbs bare and black.

Down thro' long aisles high arching
Go light gusts and ripples of breathless loves marching—
The warm light, the young night, the soft flight—out, whether
Or springtime, or ringtime or wingtime, or whether
The wooing soft south of His weather, God's weather.

MAY

There's a blurr'd roll of drumbeats. The soft south wind straying
In to fresh whitewashed walls, in thro' clean curtains swaying;
Stealing warm over birdbills, honeysuckles a-Maying,
Over piled baskets swinging from plied knockers' playing;
Past peonies, trilliums, syringas, outstaying
The first flush of spring; in from gardens fresh growing,
Clean swept;

On where, close-ranged, the head-stones are showing,
Enwreathed and enshrined in love's full-tide outflowing,
Starr'd with flags under battle-shot, stained banners streaming

Down the long aisles' new shadows—the enfilading fifes screaming
To drumbeats.

And slow feet, as the last salute flashes,
Step softly—rapt dreamers—down the ranked graves' heal'd gashes,
Back with Duty's shocked call while the war-fury lashes—
The Call's cause, the conflict, war's upper and nether;
The Call's cause and Fame's upmost, or ungratefulest nether,—
With the futile fife's screaming, the drumbeat's worn leather,
Halting back down the long dusty street—back together,
With the wearisome years, thro' the evening, together,
With the sigh of the southwind, the balm of God's weather.

JUNE

In the west pile the stormclouds, and bluegrass and roses
Bend low in the grey of the west wind while closes
Each loud-slamming shutter. By the hurrying flashes
The coops clatter down and the sheeted rain slashes
Ere the wind-tumbled flock finds the home-roost, while crying
Up the gale, go glad children on wild pinions flying.

The gulfed heavens darken and black thunder, sending
Its vivid light, shows where the cherry-trees, bending,
Snap under young fruit; bushes prostrated, pending
The onslaught of swift serried rainsheets, storm-driven;
While the outbuildings give in the wind.

Scotched and scriven
The etched lightning dies. Above garrulous gutters
The tall hill-crown's arched promise its radiant hope utters
While, purple, the heart of the orchard still mutters.
The waters, clear, rippled, in the sunset light falling,
Spread out to the big ditch; from the ridgepole's perch calling,
The robin, the rainbow foretelling, forestalling.
The last gusts the grasses enfringe and enfeather,
Beaten prone in the wet fragrant weather, God's weather.

JULY

The heavy shade bends to tall clover and grasses.
The fleet bare feet burn where the warped boardwalk passes.
The cherries gleam black under dark branches bending;
The berries hang heavy at the long path's tired ending.

With the phlox and petunias their lavish gifts flinging,
With the larkspurs, the zinnias, the hollyhocks bringing
Their pride and their comfort, the paling gate, swinging,
Leads the path thro' the perfume and early stars peeping
To the vine-covered door, that, a weathered watch keeping,
Opens back thro' the hush of the prayer and the sleeping.

The lifting corn cracks thro' the dark in high feather,
Growing, grateful for grace of hot weather, God's weather.

AUGUST

God's peace and the moon on the meadow's dead clover.
Dawn's hush and the fresh breath of morn spilling over
Down the long dusty lane from the thicket's close cover.
The dust clouds fly hot from the sober hoofs hieing
Across the scorched prairies from far fields outlying;
Plodding out thro' brown grasses and wayside weeds drying,
With the wayside wings whirring—slow poising—far flying;
Trailing out to the blue timber line's cool inbreathing,
To the spring with the wagons their blue smoke enwreathing,
And the ranging white tents the encampment ensheathing.

The fresh dews at nightfall breathe fragrant and bearing
New straw and new lumber, with the tall torches flaring
Above hurrying feet over God's upland faring,
Tired faces uplifted; while the rolling hymns wearing
Away thro' the woods, touch the restless tired tether,
The clanking of harness, the creak of worn leather,
With the mists and the moon and the weather—God's weather.

SEPTEMBER

All gold! Down the hillside peep clumped daisies golden.
Thro' the shimmering sunlight by the warm valley holden,
Flaunting feathered gold fleece by the wood curves enfolden
Toss across the young pines, foam to spoke, hub and felloe
At the road's ragged rim with the Autumn's first yellow.

The yellow haze fades to the hillside's faint gloaming,
The peace of the evening, the halting bells homing;
With the east lifting low and the harvest moon spilling
Over fenced field and fold. Swinging white floods outfilling
Crest-high, valley wide, lip the forest brim, embossing
The wood-balm's hushed healing, the wood-road's tired tossing;
Filter faint thro' the tree-trunks, past the hemlock's black blotches,
Splashing white against birches spurting wide silvered splotches.

And moonset and shadow. In the purple dawn-watches
From the farmyard's close corner, the fence-row's gnarled notches,
Comes the plaintive first call from chilled fleece and feather,
With frost on the immortelles; or ewe-lamb or wether
Wakes the echoes, while on tiptoes, chanticleer in high feather
Sends a cheer down the year to just weather—God's weather.

OCTOBER

The cold late rain drips from the low clouds close palling
The gullied road winding thro' far woodbirds' calling,
And wet woods, dark, dripping, with sodden leaf falling.

The sharp west wind gives chase to lightened clouds flying,
Swinging south, sweeping soft over long hill-slopes drying,
While the warmer sun spills down thro' reek of things dying.

The blue haze blurs soft, the horizon outlining;
Hangs warm on the woodland with the summer sun shining
Down woodroad, thro' woodcries, down thro' oaks carnadining;

While fine spinning cobwebs from the deep blue sky reaches
Web the sumach's sure red, trail from coppered gold beeches,
Catch the sassafras scarlet, thread the gold of young maple,
Dip to bursting burrs dropping—the squirrels' crammn'd staple.

The home-call: whether cobweb, or beeches' gold tether,
Wet woodroad, or woodcries, or red upland, or whether
The haze on the home hill and weather, God's weather.

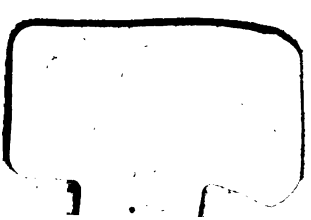
NOVEMBER

But bleak blows the wind from the northeast; in drifting
The sleeted snow clings to the grey woods and, lifting,
Whirls across the shock'd fields, the grey roofs, and, sifting
In thro' cranny and crevice, blurs the fold's safe enclosure,
Bridges up the bushed breastwork to the storm's sure exposure,
Beckons blind thro' the swinging barn-door's safe embrasure
To the long lane's fenced bleat and the orchard's erasure.

The loosened vines lean down, their dead tendrils swinging,
To the flitting red lure from the fragrant fire's singing,
To the arm chair's charmed circle, the wet storm-wraps steaming,
To the wide hearth's clean comfort, the collie's worn dreaming;
To the flick of the snow as the panes fleck and feather;
To the hush of the long prayer, that—kneeling together—
Wells out with the wind and the weather, God's weather.

DECEMBER

The dusk of the evening, with winter stars growing
Out from blue, breaking thro' hanging low cloud banks snowing;
With the long dark street hush'd under banked branches bowing
Over walks waiting deep under blind paths' blurr'd strowing;
With the red lamplight under high-pitched grey roofs, growing
Dim, distant.

The old mill-front frowning, blank, glooming
Down on glad revels glimpsed thro' the swung door's swift looming;
On the appeal of the windows, with gay pageant gleaming,
And child-faces pressed to the pane—drifting—dreaming.
Past today's tender thankfulness, child-longings borrow
High hopes and fair dreams for God's perfect tomorrow
And love's perfect round.

Trailing, hushed snowflakes clinging
To the pickets' piled points, past the low-hung gate swinging,
Lead the homing feet back as the long hushed street darkens
Under low-hanging stars; and waiting hearts hearken,
Circled close round the fireside flanked by massed greens arboral,
Over loves cradled sacrament; while earth's mighty choral
Sweeps—the song of the angels, the dawn-burst auroral,
The star and the manger—down the white night; and, together,
With His promise, His peace, His good gifts—together—
We wait with the stars thro' His weather, God's weather.